



State of Connecticut

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Judiciary Committee March 14, 2022

Testimony in Opposition to S.B. 16 AN ACT ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE CRIME

Co-Chairs Senator Winfield, and Representative Stafstrom; Ranking Member Senator Kissel, and Representative Fishbein; and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in opposition to **SB 16, AN ACT ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE CRIME**.

The right to bear arms is a fundamental constitutional right which belongs to every American and the attempts being made through S.B. 16 to restrict that right will only harm the law-abiding citizens of Connecticut. The provisions of this bill could lead to mass violations of people's second amendment right and deprive them of their ability to defend themselves effectively in dangerous situations. SB 16 grants any police officer the power to demand a pistol permit without any justifiable cause. No longer will a "reasonable suspicion of a crime" be needed before citizens doing nothing wrong are commanded to show their permits. Citizens are also strictly limited in where they can carry their personal firearms. The bill restricts citizens from having firearms on their person when in demonstrations, however, the very broad definition of demonstrations restricts people from carrying guns in typical day to day activities. If there are at least fifteen people present, people are disallowed from visibly carrying a gun in political demonstrations, the parking lots of restaurants and other places of business, or even on publicly owned sidewalks. They are also restricted from carrying guns on any buses or trains, which is extremely concerning as this could leave many people traveling at night especially vulnerable to potential attackers. This prevents people from having a chance to defend themselves from the dangers that do, unfortunately, exist in the world. The increased governmental oversight that the bill calls for is similarly concerning.

The added supervision of gun stores which the bill proposes is also highly problematic and is not a measure that will decrease gun violence in the state of Connecticut. Gun stores are already required to receive a Federal Firearms License and to create an all-new licensing process will be more onerous. One aspect of the application/renewal process is also very troublesome is the bill gives the Commissioner of Emergency Services and Public Protection the unilateral ability to add additional qualifications onto the applications for state licenses. By trusting this judgment to only one individual, lawful gun store owners will be extremely vulnerable to potential abuses of power. Furthermore, if the "other materials" the commissioner would require are particularly expensive to supply, small, privately owned gun shops could be unable to afford the cost of these materials and swiftly be set back financially. This could even lead to these smaller gun stores being put out of business and full control of the gun market will be left with much larger corporations. With only a handful of large corporate entities remaining, they alone will determine the availability of firearms for our law-abiding residents.

Please protect the Second Amendment rights of Connecticut's citizens by opposing **S.B. 16 AN ACT ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE CRIME.**